55 YEARS OF YOUR TRUST
HAROON OILS LIMITED
Producers of quality automotive and industrial lubricants.
Head Office: 021-32314066-8 Regional Office: 042-35757759
email: hol@haroonoils.com | www.haroonoils.com

DAWN

55 YEARS OF YOUR TRUST
HAROON OILS LIMITED
Producers of quality automotive and industrial lubricants.
Head Office: 021-32314066-8 Regional Office: 042-35757759
email: hol@haroonoils.com | www.haroonoils.com

Khawaja Asif assails judiciary in defence of 27th Amendment

Calls legal system's historical role 'black, horrible'

By Amir Wasim

ISLAMABAD: Defence Minister Khawaja Asif on Friday fiercely defended the 27th constitutional amendment on the floor of the National Assembly, lambasting the judiciary for what he termed a "black and horrible" past role in the country's history.

Speaking on a point of order amid a noisy protest by the opposition, Mr Asif singled out former judges Mansoor Ali Shah and Athar Minallah for resigning from the Supreme Court after the amendment's passage.

Mr Asif alleged they have "forgotten their past" and were now posturing as "guardians of democracy".

"Their [SC judges] conscience has awakened only after their monopoly was curtailed," he said, criticising the judiciary's role in the 2017 removal of the Nawaz Sharif government. He accused Supreme Court judges at the time of being part of a conspiracy against Sharif.

"The entire process started with the Panama case when [the then] chief justice Saqib Nisar formed two benches that declared Nawaz Sharif ineligible to hold office," Mr Asif said, adding that another bench, led by Justice Nisar, later decided Sharif's ineligibility would be for life.

He said the same judicial figures were consistently seen deciding all major political cases. "When these kangaroo courts were being formed, Nawaz Sharif was being victimised, and an agenda was being implemented that he would not remain a leader and would be expelled from politics forever; at that time, no one felt any shame," the minister said.

The minister claimed the judiciary's history, from the hanging of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto to validating all military takeovers, has been a "horrible and black" role unseen in any other part of the world. He also made personal remarks about Athar Minallah, noting he had served in a provincial cabinet under military dictator Gen Pervez Musharraf.

"These judges from yesterday were serving in the SC and high courts back then; now they're writing poetry and issuing political statements," Mr Asif said, in an apparent reference to a poem in Justice Shah's resignation letter.

The verbal attack came shortly after Justice Aminuddin took the oath as the first chief justice of the newly formed Federal Constitutional Court. Mr Asif said the 27th Amendment would ensure justice and help resolve constitutional matters transparently.

Turning to the protesting PTI members, Mr Asif accused them of having "selective amnesia", recalling how 52 bills were passed in 30 minutes under the PTI government and how Imran Khan dissolved the assembly amid a no-confidence motion. Referring to the slogan "if there is no Khan, there is no Pakistan", Mr Asif said it proved "they don't stand with the Constitution of Pakistan but instead with an individual".

"They [PTI members] are sympathisers of terrorists who come from across the border and carry out bloodshed and destruction here," the minister alleged, adding that no one from the PTI had condemned recent terrorist attacks.

After the minister, PTI's Asad Qaiser took the floor and expressed concern over a recent drone attack on a wedding in KP. "I want to ask, are the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa citizens of Pakistan or not?" he asked, adding that "drone attacks and collateral damage are not acceptable to us".

Meanwhile, the government introduced four bills in the assembly: the Port Qasim Authority (Amendment) Bill, 2025; the Gwadar Port Authority (Amendment) Bill 2025; the Newspaper Employees (Conditions of Service) (Amendment) Bill, 2025; and the Associated Press of Pakistan Corporation (Amendment) Bill, 2025.

Four linked to Afghanistan-based terror group held

• Govt says cell involved in Tuesday's suicide bombing busted • Claims the network 'guided at every step' by Afghanistan-based TTP leadership

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan said Friday it had arrested four members of a cell over this week's suicide bombing in Islamabad, which the government said was led from Afghanistan.

The Tuesday attack outside court buildings was claimed by a faction of the Pakistani Taliban, known as the Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP).

Those arrested in connection with the bombing, which killed 12 people and wounded dozens, were linked to the TTP according to Islamabad.

"The network was handled and guided at every step by the... high command based in Afghanistan," a government statement said, adding that the cell's alleged commander and three other members were in custody.

"Investigations are continuing, and more revelations and arrests are expected," it said, identifying the bomber as Usman alias Qari, a resident of Nangarhar province in eastern Afghanistan.

The government did not detail where the arrests were made.

Earlier on Thursday, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi told the Senate that the bomber was Afghan. Islamabad has largely been spared major militant violence in recent years, with the last suicide attack occurring in December 2022.

But the country is facing a resurgence of violence, which officials attribute mainly to armed groups allegedly sheltered on Afghan soil.

Mr Naqvi on Monday claimed that Afghan nationals also took part in an assault this week on Cadet College Wana.

The Taliban government has not commented on Pakistan's allegations, but has expressed "deep sorrow and condemnation" over both attacks.

The accusations come amid a sharp deterioration in ties between Islamabad and Kabul, with recent attacks prompting the worst cross-border clashes in years last month.

More than 70 people were killed, including dozens of Afghan civilians, according to the UN.—AFP

Pakistan seeks 20,000 PhD scholarships from China, US

Govt working with stakeholders to develop seven-point framework for global ranking of Pakistani varsities, minister says

By Khaleeq Kiani

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan is seeking 20,000 PhD scholarships from China and the US — 10,000 each — and developing multiple-criteria framework for ranking of the country's universities acceptable globally to build a strong human resource base for knowledge-driven growth, says Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal on Friday.

Speaking at a news conference at the launch of monthly Development Update October 2025, the minister said the government was working with relevant stakeholders to develop a seven-point framework for ranking of Pakistani universities in line with global practices. He said nearly 60pc of the country's population was under the age of 30 which required to be upgraded in terms of knowledge base while reining in population growth. Unless controlled, national population would be touching 380 million by 2047 when Pakistan turns 100.

He said China had been requested to allocate 10,000 PhD scholarships in artificial intelligence, engineering, and emerging sciences at China's leading universities over the next decade to build a strong human resource base for knowledge-driven growth. He said the government also planned to secure 10,000 PhD scholarships from top American universities as well.

The minister said Pakistan's macroeconomic indicators had been on an upward trajectory but had been victim of climate change as evident from two successive floods in 2022 and 2025. He said the recent floods had caused fewer damages than 2022 but this was first time after 1988 that Punjab had been through such devastating floods. Despite these floods, he said, timely government interventions, including NDMA-led evacuations, coordinated relief operations, and proactive contingency planning, ensured continuity in critical sectors, safeguarded livelihoods, and reinforced the nation's commitment to sustainable economic recovery, showing resilience in the national economy.

Pakistan, Saudi militaries to strengthen defence pact

RAWALPINDI: Chief of General Staff (CGS) Lt Gen Syed Aamer Raza called on Gen Fayyadh Bin Hameed Al-Rowaily, the chief of general staff of the Royal Saudi Armed Forces in Riyadh to discuss broadening strategic ties and strengthening the mutual defence agreement signed by the two nations, ISPR said on Friday.

"During the meeting, matters of mutual strategic interest were discussed, with a special focus on strengthening bilateral defence cooperation, enhancing interoperability, and advancing collaboration under the Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement," read a statement issued by the ISPR here. It added that both sides reaffirmed their commitment to further deepening the long-standing fraternal ties between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, contributing towards regional peace, stability, and self-reliance.

A special meeting of the Pakistan-KSA Bilateral Defence Industrial Forum was also held in Riyadh.

The Pakistan tri-services delegation was led by CGS Lt Gen Raza, while the Saudi side was headed by Khalid Al Biyari, assistant minister of defence for executive affairs. During the meeting, both sides reviewed the progress of defence cooperation projects and discussed new avenues for joint ventures in emerging technologies in line with the Kingdom's Vision 2030.—APP

Pakistan Banking awards 2025 Winners
PAKISTAN BANKING AWARDS
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF BANKING AND FINANCE, PAKISTAN
DAWN | A·F·FERGUSON&Co. | A member firm of the PwC network
10 YEARS
Celebrating a Milestone: A Decade of Excellence!
The 10th Pakistan Banking Awards 2025
The Definitive Benchmark for Banking Excellence
Best Bank
MEEZAN BANK LIMITED
Best Bank for Women Inclusion
THE BANK OF PUNJAB
Best Bank for Digital Excellence
BANK ALFALAH LIMITED
Best Microfinance Institution
KASHF FOUNDATION
Best Bank for Customer Engagement
BANK ALFALAH LIMITED
Best Bank for Small and Medium Enterprises
THE BANK OF PUNJAB
Best Mid-sized Bank
FAYSAL BANK LIMITED
Best Bank for Agriculture Inclusion
THE BANK OF PUNJAB
Best Bank for ESG
HABIB BANK LIMITED
PAKISTAN BANKING AWARDS 2025
Honouring Ten Years of Financial Leadership in Pakistan
For more information, please contact us at:
Tel: 111-000-427 Email: business@nibaf.org.pk Website: www.nibaf.sbp.org.pk National Institute of Banking and Finance Pakistan Pakistan Banking Awards